

S/N 10/660,965

Atty Dkt No. GP-303054 (GM-0390PUS)

Remarks

The Examiner finds that the application discloses the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention:

With respect to tether designs:

Species 1: represented by Figure 3a
Species 2: represented by Figure 3b
Species 3: represented by Figure 3c
Species 4: represented by Figure 3d

With respect to lateral tether elements:

Species 1: represented by Figure 3e
Species 2: represented by Figure 3f
Species 3: represented by Figure 3g

With respect to tether to airbag cushion attachment arrangements:

Species 1: represented by Figure 4a
Species 2: represented by Figure 4b
Species 3: represented by Figure 4c
Species 4: represented by Figure 4d
Species 5: represented by Figure 5a
Species 6: represented by Figure 5b
Species 7: represented by Figure 5c
Species 8: represented by Figure 5d

The Examiner requires Applicant to elect a single disclosed species of a tether design, a lateral tether element and a tether to airbag cushion attachment arrangement to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is held to be allowable. The Examiner indicates that currently, it appears that at least claim 1 is generic.

Applicant notes that Figures 2a-2d are not included in the species listing above. In a November 16, 2005 telephone conference with Attorney Jean McCarthy, the Examiner indicated that he considered the species of Figures 2a-2d to be "generic" and would examine that species in addition to the species elected in response to the Restriction requirement. Applicant notes that Figure 2d presents an alternative tether attachment arrangement than that presented in Figure 2c.

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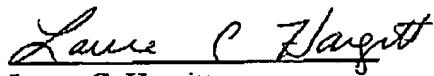
In addition to the embodiment(s) of Figures 2a-2d, Applicant elects, without traverse, to prosecute: (i) with respect to tether designs: Species 2, represented by Figure 3b; (ii) with respect to lateral tether elements: Species 2, represented by Figure 3f; and (iii) with respect to tether to airbag cushion attachment arrangements: Species 3, represented by Figure 4c. Applicant notes that the Brief Description of the Drawings section of the specification indicates that the species of Figures 3b, 3f and 4c are for use in the air bag assembly of Figures 2a-2b. Accordingly, Applicant referred to Figures 2a-2b in combination with the elected species in determining which claims read on the elected species.

Applicant agrees that claim 1 is generic and submits that claims 2, 12, 17, 19, 21 and 22 are also generic. The following claims read on the generic species of Figures 2a-2d: claims 1, 2, 3, 4, 12, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 24. The following claims read on tether design Species 2, represented by Figure 3b: claims 1, 2, 4, 12, 13, 17, 19, 21, 22 and 23. The following claims read on lateral tether element Species 2, represented by Figure 3f: claims 1, 2, 4, 12, 17, 19, 20, 21 and 22. The following claims read on the tether to airbag cushion attachment arrangement Species 3, represented by Figure 4c: claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24 and 28.

In addition to the election of species, Applicant wishes to amend the claims as indicated in the Listing of Claims. Specifically, Applicant wishes to amend claim 14 to depend from claim 12 rather than claim 13 and add new claim 28. Neither amendment presents new matter. Claim 28 is supported by the support elements shown in Figures 4c, 5e, 5f and 5g, each of which forms a loop to secure the first loop of the tether. For instance, with respect to Figure 4c, support element 114A forms a loop 118 at which the first loop 44G is secured.

Please charge any additional fee due to Deposit Account No. 07-0960.

Respectfully submitted,


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